

Introduced by Senators Soto and Alarcon

February 18, 2005

An act to add Section 8687.7 to the Government Code, relating to emergency services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 477, as introduced, Soto. Emergency services: recovery process.

Existing law, the Disaster Assistance Act, requires that the Director of the Office of Emergency Services provide financial assistance to local agencies for public real property that is damaged or destroyed by a disaster.

This bill would require the office to establish a process with guidelines to be followed in order for a community to recover from an emergency or disaster and require that process to designate the office as the coordinator of the community recovery process until each local agency in a community determines that the office's assistance is no longer needed, provide training, require the office to be onsite as soon as practicable after an emergency or natural disaster occurs, require the office to coordinate the use of temporary services, authorize the office to coordinate the establishment of temporary structures, including local assistance centers, showers and bathroom facilities, and temporary administrative offices, and require the office to encourage the participation of nongovernmental organizations in the community recovery process to supplement recovery activities undertaken by federal or local agencies.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 8687.7 is added to the Government Code, to read:

8687.7. (a) As used in this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) “Community” means a geographic area impacted by an emergency or disaster that includes the jurisdiction of one or more local agencies.

(2) “Community recovery partners” means local, state, and federal agencies, private nonprofit organizations, nongovernmental agencies, faith-based organizations, and other private entities.

(b) The office shall establish a process with guidelines to be followed in order for a community to recover from an emergency or disaster. The process shall do all of the following:

(1) Designate the office as the coordinator of the community recovery process until each local agency in a community determines that the department’s assistance is no longer needed.

(2) Develop a training curriculum and provide regular training opportunities to communities and community recovery partners to assist them in recovering from an emergency or natural disaster.

(3) Require the office to be onsite as soon as practicable after an emergency or natural disaster occurs.

(4) Require the office to coordinate the use of temporary services, including, but not limited to, direct assistance to individuals, families, and businesses, crisis counseling, disaster unemployment assistance, food and clothing vouchers, communications systems, replacement of personal identification documents, provision of potable water, housing, farm service assistance, tax relief, insurance, and legal services.

(5) Authorize the office to coordinate the establishment of temporary structures, including local assistance centers, showers and bathroom facilities, and temporary administrative offices.

(6) Require the office to encourage the participation of nongovernmental organizations in the community recovery process to supplement recovery activities undertaken by federal or local agencies.

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